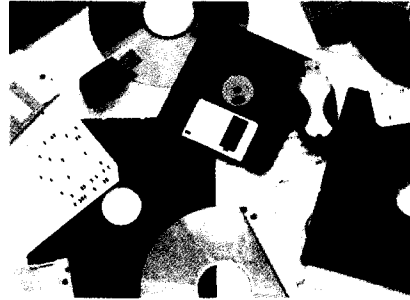


# Building Montana's Digital Records Preservation

**Capability:** HJR 2 Legislation for Funding  
MHS Archives Consultant



## Montana State Archives Mission:

- Appraise public records for continuing historic value;
- Preserve and provide access to state agency records, regardless of format, that have met their agency needs but have continuing historical value.
- Collaborate with State Records Committee to establish policies, procedures, systems, standards and practices to assist records creators to create and retain records which are authentic, reliable and preservable.
- Promote sound records management principles and practices;

*To achieve this in the current technological world, the State Archives will maintain partnerships with other public agencies and organizations, including the Secretary of State Records and Information Management Division and State Information Technology Services Division (SITSD) to effectively manage digital records. Statutory authority for the State Archives includes but is not limited to MCA 22-3-203 in which the Archives is mandated to "...preserve noncurrent records of permanent historical value".*

**Goal:** Hire consultant to complete a feasibility study to develop digital preservation capabilities at the Montana State Archives in order to collect, preserve and provide access to historically significant Montana State government records created or maintained in a digital format.

## **Deliverables to include:**

- Report delineating most cost effective and efficient method for State Archives to receive, manage, preserve and provide access to electronic records. This will include determining staffing, hardware/software, and contracted service's needs as well as providing recommendations for a digital preservation strategy. The report will include alternatives options and why they were not chosen.
- Presentations/training on electronic records preservation best practices for Archives Staff, State Records Committee and major stake holders.  
Consultation with SITSD to develop workflow to transfer records between the upcoming Electronic Records Management (ERM) enterprise system and the State Archives. This would include recommendations on technology platform options and mechanisms.
- Develop and implement survey and conduct interviews with select agency Records Managers to gather a cross section of preservation needs and challenges across state government. Use resulting data to establish recommendations on technology platform options and mechanisms to transfer electronics records from the agencies to the State Archives. Also use data to determine agencies best suited for pilot project.

Education and Local Government Meeting  
June 17, 2014

- Recommendations for funding options for any technology investments and ongoing operating expenses.

**Benefits:** Consultant will create a road map for the State Archives to meet its legal mandate to preserve electronic records of enduring historical significance.

**The resulting work will:**

- Allow for the most efficient and cost effective path to digital preservation of significant government records
- Ensure that rapidly changing technologies do not create an “Information Dark Age”
- Compliment efforts of SITSD
- Compliment efforts to improve Electronic Records Management practices in state agencies

**Risks:** The preservation of public records is essential to conduct the day-to-day business of government, and to leave a historical legacy for future generations. Documenting the people’s business, and how that business was conducted is an essential tool in a free society. The public record is used by people for business, historical, genealogical, and legal research.

**The loss of electronic records of historical importance means a loss of government:**

- Understanding of intent
- Accountability
- Ability to meet legal requirements
- Informational and monetary assets
- Efficiency

**Implementation:** The State Archives anticipates a three phase project:

- **In Phase One** a consultant would be hired to complete a feasibility study regarding the development of digital preservation capabilities at the Montana State Archives. Funding for phase one be provided via legislation request currently before this committee. The cost provided in the legislative request (\$208,000) is based on an estimated consultant fee of \$100 per hour for work completed during the period September 1, 2015 to September 1, 2016. Total billable hours estimated at 2080.
- **Phase Two** would consist of a pilot project implementing the consultant’s findings including establishing workflow, policies and procedures, purchasing hardware and software required to perform in-house preservation tasks and/or create an RFI/RFP to select required vendor services. Funding for phase two would include staffing costs, hardware/software and vendor services adding to approximately \$125,000 (\$110,000 ongoing staffing costs; \$15,000 hardware/software). The State Archives will apply for a National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) grant in 2016 that if received would offset some of these costs. These grants, however, are extremely competitive. Should grant funding not be possible, legislative support would be requested during the 2017 session.
- **Phase Three** would include an analysis of the pilot implementation, review and updating of processes and procedures, and the full roll-out of the preservation plan to all of state government. Funding for phase three would include ongoing staffing costs, maintenance contracts and storage costs adding to approximately \$120,000. It is anticipated that legislation for funding would be required.